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SHREVEPORT BUSINESS MAN SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT

Charges related to City of Shreveport Department of Community Development loan

Shreveport, Louisiana . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced that **RODERICK CASTON**, age 37, of Shreveport, was sentenced today by United States District Judge S. Maurice Hicks, Jr. to **spend 12 months in prison** for theft of public money. **CASTON was also ordered to pay restitution in the amount of \$107,000.**

An indictment was returned in January of this year charging CASTON with one count of theft of public money. CASTON pleaded guilty in April. In February 2001 CASTON obtained a loan from the City of Shreveport Department of Community Development to build a car wash in Shreveport, but converted the loan proceeds for his personal use rather than for the purposes which it was intended. The loan was never repaid. Department of Community Development loans are funded by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

U.S. Attorney Washington stated: "This case is part of a broad inquiry into the use of federal Community Development Funds disbursed by the City of Shreveport and our investigation is on-going."

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. United States Sentencing Guidelines established by the United States Congress and the United States Sentencing Commission are only used as guidelines by the judge in determining the appropriate sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

This case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Shreveport Resident Agency. The case was prosecuted by First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Flanagan and Assistant U.S. Attorney Alexander C. Van Hook.

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